

Sharon  
DeMeo/R1/USEPA/US  
11/28/2012 10:12 AM

To: Michael Cobb  
cc  
bcc  
Subject: Fw: Environmental groups call on PSNH to give up using coal

Hey, thought you would like to read this as it mentions Schiller.

----- Forwarded by Sharon DeMeo/R1/USEPA/US on 11/28/2012 10:11 AM -----

From: Stephen Perkins/R1/USEPA/US  
To: David Webster/R1/USEPA/US@EPA, Damien Houlihan/R1/USEPA/US@EPA, John King/R1/USEPA/US@EPA, Sharon DeMeo/R1/USEPA/US@EPA, Dave Conroy/R1/USEPA/US@EPA  
Date: 11/28/2012 07:45 AM  
Subject: Environmental groups call on PSNH to give up using coal

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Environmental groups call on PSNH to give up using coal |

**Outlet Full Name:** Union Leader - Online

**News Text:** PEMBROKE - With the Merrimack Station coal-fired power plant looming in the background, representatives of four nonprofit environmental groups called on Public Service of New Hampshire to divorce itself from coal and end business practices they said are "antiquated and obsolete for a sustainable future."

"At this moment, you are standing in the only area in New England that has been referred for designation as being out of attainment, that is having more pollution than is acceptable under EPA standards for sulfur dioxide," said Jonathan Peress of the Conservation Law Foundation, as a large white plume of exhaust, mostly water vapor, poured out of a smokestack behind him.

Peress was joined by representatives of the National Wildlife Federation, the New Hampshire Sierra Club and the Toxics Action Center at a ballfield in Pembroke - a site chosen for the annual Dirty Dozen news conference because of its proximity to Merrimack Station in nearby Bow.

For 25 years, the Toxics Action Center has annually identified its Dirty Dozen award winners throughout New England, and this year selected PSNH in New Hampshire, as well as the ExxonMobil Maine to Montreal pipeline, which spans all three Northern New England states.

In addition to Merrimack Station, PSNH also operates Schiller Station, a coal-fired plant along the Piscataqua River in Portsmouth.

"PSNH deserves this award because it has steadfastly adhered to its failing, high-polluting, expensive power plants. Both Schiller and Merrimack station generate pollution more cost effectively than they generate electricity," Peress said.

PSNH spokesman Martin Murray defended the company's efforts to keep both plants in operation.

"Both of the plants named have operated reliably for years and have provided benefit to our customers," he said. "We constantly seek innovative measures to reduce our environmental impact, and both plants have earned awards for their environmental initiatives."

The company recently invested more than \$420 million to install scrubbers at Merrimack Station to reduce toxic emissions.

"Notwithstanding the fact that they have installed wet scrubbers designed to reduce sulfur dioxide and mercury emissions by as much as 90 percent, they will still be the largest emitter of sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide in New Hampshire," Peres said. "Schiller Station was designed in the 1950s and is one of the least efficient coal-fired power plants in all of the country and certainly the least efficient in New England. It also has no emissions controls. Merrimack Station was designed and built in the 1960s, and is now operating at less than 30 percent capacity, yet they just invested \$420 million to extend its useful life."

Peres said PSNH ratepayers are now spending on average about \$200 per year in "above market costs" to help PSNH and its parent company, Northeast Utilities, recoup the capital investment on Merrimack Station scrubbers.

Meanwhile, capacity at both Merrimack and Schiller has been greatly reduced as PSNH finds it more cost-effective to buy lower-priced electricity generated largely by natural gas on the wholesale market.

"Their business is in a death spiral," Peres said. "Customers are buying lower cost and cleaner power from competitive suppliers. What you are looking at is a monument to a failed business strategy that will remain there as a testament to that failure for years to come."

#### Emission initiatives

PSNH has consistently argued that keeping the coal-fired plants online enhances its flexibility in providing power to most of New Hampshire as prices fluctuate on the wholesale market. Much of the data in the Dirty Dozen report regarding the two plants is out of date, Murray said.

"It is interesting we're talking about this today, as both plants are operating," he said. "That means that they are needed, today, in order to provide a stable, reliable and economic source of energy to New Hampshire. The report apparently relies on 2011 data. That would not reflect all of the emission reduction initiatives that are now in place, as the mercury and sulfur reduction system was put into operation late in the year."

He called Merrimack Station, with its mercury and sulfur emission reduction system now operating, "one of the cleanest coal fired power plants in the nation" and said Schiller Station meets all current environmental requirements, and "is well positioned to meet ever more stringent requirements going forward."

That doesn't mean PSNH is not taking steps to introduce cleaner power options, Murray said. "Our initiatives include the permanent replacement of a large, 50 megawatt coal boiler with a state of the art wood-fired boiler at Schiller Station. PSNH was the first utility in the nation to make such a significant change."

## Quarter century of reports

The Toxics Action Center report, "25 Years of the Dirty Dozen: Past and Current Pollution Threats in New England," profiles 12 sites and companies, naming them "the most notorious pollution threats in the region," and proposes alternatives.

The ExxonMobil Montreal pipeline would link pipelines from Alberta, Canada, to the coast of Maine to carry Canadian tar sands oil to the South Portland waterfront. It was identified in the Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire sections of the Dirty Dozen report.

Other sites or organizations named in the report were Advanced Disposal and Entergy Nuclear in Vermont, and Casella Waste Management in Maine.

Massachusetts "winners" included Advanced Disposal, Brayton Point Coal Plant, Entergy Nuclear, General Electric and a New Bedford PCB dump.

Sites in Connecticut were the Resource Recovery Authority in Hartford, the Raymark Superfund Site, Connecticut Environmental Council and General Electric. The Central Landfill in Johnston, R.I., also made the list.

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